

Message Text

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54

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 091255Z APR 74

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5192

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T JERUSALEM 520

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO, XF

SUBJ: JORDANIAN-WEST BANK ISSUES

REF: AMMAN 1855

1. AS FOOTNOTE TO AMMAN'S 1855, AND WITH EMBASSY'S FOREBEARANCE, I MIGHT RELATE TWO COMMENTS MADE TO ME IN AMMAN DURING VISIT THERE MARCH 17-19.

2. INFORMATION MINISTER ABU ODEH, WHO I BELIEVE WAS AT ONE TIME AT LEAST THOUGHT TO BE CLOSE TO PALACE, GAVE AS HIS "PERSONAL VIEW" THAT BEST WAY TO ULTIMATE WEST BANK-JORDANIAN UNION LAY THROUGH PHASE OF SEPARATE WEST BANK ENTITY. ONE HAD TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IMPORTANT FACTS THAT PALESTINIANS NOW FELT THEMSELVES TO BE SEPARATE PEOPLE AND THAT LARGE SEGMENT OF PLO HAD UNEXPECTEDLY MOVED TOWARD ACCEPTANCE OF MODERATE SETTLEMENT. IF JORDAN MOVED TOO DIRECTLY TO TAKE OVER WEST BANK, PALESTINIANS WOULD BE ALIENATED AND OPPORTUNITY TO DRAW MUCH OF PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT INTO SETTLEMENT WOULD BE LOST. PLO WOULD BE RERADICALIZED. IF SOME FORM OF SEPARATE ENTITY ACCEPTED BY JORDAN, FACTS OF GEOGRAPHY, FAMILY CONNECTIONS, ETC., WOULD ULTIMATELY DRAW WEST AND EAST BANKS TOGETHER.

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3. ABDUL MONEM RIFAI VOLUNTEERED COMMENT THAT JORDAN COULD NOT EXPECT WEST BANK TO RETURN UNLESS MORE REPRESENTATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEM DEVELOPED IN JORDAN WITH MORE CIVIL RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION. SITUATION COULD NOT CONTINUE, FOR EXAMPLE, WHERE NEWSPAPER COULD BE SNUFFED OUT FOR DISAGREEING WITH GOVERNMENT. I ASKED IF IT WAS FEASIBLE TO MAKE THESE CHANGES AND HE REPLIED THEY MUST BE MADE AND THIS MUST BE GUARANTEED TO WEST BANKERS.

4. RE REFTTEL, WE AGREE GENERALLY WITH MASRI'S ASSESSMENT PARAS 3, 4,, AND 6. RE PARA 5, WE ARE NOT SO FAR INCLINED BELIEVE RECENT SPATE OF MINOR TERRORIST INCIDENTS NECESSARILY REFLECTS BASIC IMPORVEMENT IN FATAH (OR OTHER PLO) INFRASTRUCTURE. WE RECALL SIMILAR UPSWING YEAR AGO, FOR EXAMPLE. (WE QUESTION ALSO WHETHER TERRORIST ACTS ARE THOSE OF FATAH ITSELF; PFLP SEEMS MORE LIKELY TO EXTENT ACTS ARE NOT LOCALLY INSPIRED.) NEVERTHELESS, IT IS LIKELY PLO HAS BEEN MORE ACTIVE GENERALLY ON WEST BANK, ORGANIZING, ESTABLISHING CONTACTS, ETC., AND THAT IT IS GETTING MORE COOPERATION FROM LOCAL POPULATION. DAY

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